

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE

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EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT SECTO 8170 ACTION MANAMA DOHA ABU DHABI MUSCAT
SANA KUWAIT REBAT ALGIERS TUNIS TEHRAN NATO PARIS BONN USUN TOKYO
INFO BAGHDAD TRIPOLI LONDON MOSCOW CAIRO BEIRUT DAMASCUS
AMMAN JIDDA TEL AVIV SECSTATE AUG 13.

QUOTE S E C R E T SECTO 08170

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS: OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS)

SUBJECT: BRIEFING OTHER GOVERNMENTS ON SECRETARY'S MIDDLE EAST TRIP

FOR AMBASSADORS AND CHARGES FROM THE SECRETARY

1. ACTION ADDRESSEES MAY MAKE THE FOLLOWING POINTS IN
BRIEFING THEIR HOST GOVERNMENTS ON MY JUST-COMPLETED
TRIP TO THE MIDDLE EAST; USUN MAY BRIEF SYG OR HIS
REPRESENTATIVE, AND USNATO MAY BRIEF NAC.

1. THE PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE OF THE TRIP WAS TO SET IN
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MOTION A MORE ACTIVE AND DETAILED PHASE OF PREPARATION
FOR RECONVENING THE GENEVA CONFERENCE UNDE CIRCUMSTANCES
THAT WOULD GIVE IT A REASONABLE CHANGE OF SUCCESS.

2. HAVING HEARD THE VIEWS OF THE MIDDLE EAST LEADERS
CONCERNED DURING THEIR MEETINGS WITH THE PRESIDENT OVER THE
PAST SEVERAL MONTHS, I WAS IN A POSITION TO MAKE
CONCRETE SUGGESTIONS DESIGNED TO BEGIN BRIDGING THE

DIFFERENCES ON THE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES INVOLVED IN A SETTLEMENT AS WELL AS THE PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE CONVENING OF A GENEVA CONFERENCE.

3. WITH REGARD TO SUBSTANCE, I STRESSED THAT OUR POSITIONS ON THE CORE ISSUES OF WITHDRAWAL AND BOUNDARIES, THE NATURE OF PEACE, AND THE PALESTINIANS HAD NOT CHANGED. THEY REMAINED AS THEY HAD BEEN ENUNCIATED ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS, PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY, ESPECIALLY IN THE PRESS STATEMENTS OF PRESIDENT CARTER. I MADE SUGGESTION TO ALL THE PARTIES ABOUT GENERAL PRINCIPLES THEY MIGHT WORK TOWARD AND A FRAMEWORK AND BASIS FOR THE GENEVA NEGOTIATIONS.

I FOUND AGREEMENT IN SOME AREAS AND A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF FLEXIBILITY IN OTHERS, BUT IN A NUMBER OF AREAS THERE REMAIN WIDE GAPS. FOR EXAMPLE, THERE IS GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT THE OBJECTIVE SHOULD BE THE CONCLUSION OF PEACE TREATIES CONSTITUTING A FINAL AND COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT, AND THAT THE BASIS FOR NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BE SC RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 338. SOME PROGRESS WAS ALSO MADE TOWARD NARROWING DIFFERENCES WITH RESPECT TO THE NATURE OF PEACE. ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE WAS NO SIGNIFICANT NARROWING OF DIFFERENCES ON THE OTHER CORE ISSUES OF WITHDRAWAL AND BORDERS, AND THE NATURE OF A PALESTINIAN SETTLEMENT.

4. I ALSO DISCUSSED AT CONSIDERABLE LENGTH WITH ALL THE PARTIES THE PROBLEM ON PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. I REVIEWED THE POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES TO A SEPARATE PLO DELEGATION--A SOLUTION I SAID WAS NOT PRACTICABLE,

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GIVEN THE STRONG VIEW OF THE ISRAELIS AND THE FACT THAT ALL ORIGINAL PARTIES TO THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, INCLUDING ISRAEL, MUST AGREE TO ANY ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANTS. I SAID THE INCLUSION OF THE PALESTINIANS IN A JORDANIAN DELEGATION OR IN A UNIFIED ARAB DELEGATION SEEMED THE MOST REALISTIC ALTERNATIVES. OF THE TWO, THE UNIFIED DELEGATION SEEMED MOST LIKELY TO BE FEASIBLE, THOUGH ISRAEL CONTINUED TO OPPOSE IT, HOLDING TO ITS POSITION THAT THE ISSUES SHOULD BE SOLVED BY HAVING NON-PLO PALESTINIANS INCLUDED IN A JORDANIAN DELEGATION. THERE WERE SOME DIFFERENCES AMONG THE ARABS. AT THE END OF THE TRIP I THOUGHT THEY MIGHT BE MOVING TOWARD A CONSENSUS ACCEPTING THE UNIFIED ARAB DELEGATION CONCEPT. THOUGH EGYPT CONTINUED TO BE SKEPTICAL. I STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF A COMMON ARAB STAND ON THIS ISSUE.

5. THERE WAS ALSO A GOOD DEAL OF DISCUSSION ABOUT CREATING CONDITIONS IN WHICH THE US COULD ESTABLISH DIRECT OFFICIAL CONTACTS WITH THE PLO. ALL THE ARAB GOVERNMENTS URGED US TO THIS. WE REITERATED OUR POSITION THAT IT WAS OUT OF THE QUESTION UNLESS THE PLO ACCEPTED UNSC RESOLUTION 242 AND THE RIGHT OF ISRAEL TO EXIST. WE DISCUSSED WITH THE ARAB GOVERNMENTS THE POSSIBILITY THAT

THE PLO MIGHT ACCEPT THE RESOLUTION AND THE PRINCIPLE OF THE RIGHT OF ALL STATES IN THE AREAS (WHICH WOULD BE CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD TO INCLUDE ISRAEL) TO EXIST, WHILE STATING IS RESERVATIONS ON THE WAY IN WHICH RESOLUTION 242 DEALT WITH THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION (AS A REFUGEE QUESTION ONLY). SOME OF THE ARAB GOVERNMENTS KEPT IN TOUCH WITH THE PLO DURING THE PERIOD OF MY TRIP AND ATTEMPTED TO WORK OUT A SATISFACTORY STATEMENT OF ACCEPTANCE. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT SUCH A STATEMENT BE CLEAR AND UNAMBIGUOUS, AND THAT IT NOT BE NEGATED BY OTHER STATEMENTS-FOR EXAMPLE, REAFFIRMING THE VALIDITY OF THE PALESTINE NATIONAL CHARTER, WHICH DENIES THE RIGHT OF ISRAEL TO EXIST.

6. THE ISRAELIS ARGUED STRONGLY AGAINST US CONTACT WITH THE PLO EVEN IF IT SHOULD ACCEPT RESOLUTION 242. WE

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TOLD THEM, HOWEVER, THAT WE INTEND TO TAKE THIS STEP IF THE PLO CHANGES ITS POLICY IN THIS RESPECT

7. FROM TIME TO TIME THE SUGGESTION AROSE OF MODIFYING RESOLUTION 242 TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE CHANGE IN THE STATUS OF THE PALESTINIANS, BUT I SAID CATEGORICALLY THAT THIS WAS NOT PRACTICAL, AND THAT THE US OPPOSED ANY ATTEMPT TO AMEND RESOLUTION 242 AND WOULD VOTE AGAINST SUCH A MOVE.

8. THERE WAS ALSO CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER EXCHANGES AT THE FOREIGN MINISTERS LEVEL IN NEW YORK PRIOR TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY. IN THE END, ALL PARTIES AGREED THEY WOULD SEND FOREIGN MINISTERS OR EQUIVALENT LEVEL REPRESENTATIVES TO NEW YORK AT THE BEGINNING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, SO THAT I MAY CONTINUE THROUGH INTENSIVE BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS WITH EACH OF THEM TO BUILD ON THE TALKS HELD DURING MY TRIP AND CARRY FORWARD THE PROCESS OF PREPARING THE GROUNDWORK FOR GENEVA. I STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF ALL THE GOVERNMENTS BEING PREPARED AT THAT TIME TO BE SPECIFIC AND DETAILED ABOUT SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES, TO MAKE POSSIBLE CONCRETE PROGRESS.

9. ISRAEL HAS EXPRESSED A PREFERENCE FOR DEFERRING SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES UNTIL GENEVA, WHEREAS THE ARAB GOVERNMENTS WOULD LIKE TO SEE AGREEMENT REACHED ON THE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES AT LEAST IN PRINCIPLE BEFORE GENEVA. OUR VIEW IS THAT EVERY EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO NARROW DIFFERENCES TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE BEFORE GENEVA, SO THE CONFERENCE WILL HAVE A BETTER CHANCE OF SUCCESS, AND WE INTEND TO WORK IN THAT DIRECTION WHILE RECOGNIZING THAT SOME DIFFERENCES CAN ONLY BE FINALLY RESOLVED AT THE CONFERENCE ITSELF.

10. DURING MY TALKS IN ISRAEL I EMPHASIZED AGAIN THE US OPPOSITION TO DEVELOPMENT OF SETTLEMENTS IN THE OCCUPIED

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TERRITORIES. THE ISRAELIS ARE IN NO DOUBT ABOUT OUR POSITION BUT MADE NO COMMITMENTS.

11. IN SUMMARY, ON THE QUESTION OF PEACE NEGOTIATIONS, THE TRIP HAS ACHIEVED SOME PROGRESS. ALL THE PARTIES CONTINUE TO WANT A GENEVA CONFERENCE. THEY HAVE DEFINED THEIR POSITIONS ON THE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUE MORE CLEARLY THAN EVER BEFORE; EACH PARTY UNDERSTANDS BETTER THE POSITIONS OF THE OTHERS AND SHOWS A WILLINGNESS TO EXAMINE THEM. OUR TALKS IN NEW YORK NEXT MONTH PROMISE, FOR THESE REASONS, TO BE MORE PRODUCTIVE. I CONTINUE TO HOPE THAT WE WILL SEE A CONFERENCE BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR. THE UNITED STATES IS DETERMINED TO PRESS ITS EFFORTS WITH THE PARTIES DESPITE THE DIFFICULTIES WHICH REMAIN. WE WILL CONTINUE TO EXCHANGE VIEWS WITH THE SOVIETS AS CO-CHAIRMAN OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, AS OUR EFFORTS GO FORWARD.

12. LEBANON. I TALKED WITH ALL THE GOVERNMENT ABOUT THE SITUATION IN SOUTHERN LEBANON. THE LEBANESE INTEND TO SEND A FORCE OF THEIR OWN INTO THE AREA AS SOON AS IT CAN BE ORGANIZED, BUT THEY WERE NOT CERTAIN HOW LONG THIS WOULD TAKE. WE REITERATED TO THEM THAT WE HOPED AND INTENDED TO BE ABLE TO HELP EQUIP SUCH A FORCE, AND THAT WE HOPED OTHERS WOULD ALSO HELP IN THIS RESPECT. THE ISRAELIS AGREE ON THE NEED FOR THE LEBANESE TO PUT THEIR OWN FORCE INTO THE SOUTH, BUT EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE CONCERN ABOUT THE CURRENT SITUATION OF THE CHRISTIAN VILLAGES IN THE SOUTH. WE TOLD THEM OUR ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION OF THE VILLAGES WAS NOT SO ALARMING AS THEIRS, AND URGED THEM TO EXERCISE RESTRAINT. IN DAMASCUS, WE STRESSED TO THE SYRIANS THE IMPORTANCE OF ALL FACTIONS OBSERVING THE CEASEFIRE IN THE SOUTH AND OF PUTTING INTO EFFECT THE TERMS OF THE SHATAURA AGREEMENT.

13. FOR MOSCOW: I WILL BE BRIEFING DOBRYNIN DURING THIS COMING WEEK. WHEN I DO SO, I WILL LET YOU KNOW SO YOU CAN FOLLOW THROUGH IN PARALLEL IN MOSCOW.

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QRM FOR BAGHDAD AND TRIPOLI: IF YOU THINK IT USEFUL, YOU MAY DRAW ON FOREGOING TO BRIEF YOUR HOST GOVERNMENTS. VANCE UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

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